

# WORLD AIDS DAY 1999

## "AIDS—END THE SILENCE: Listen, Learn, Live!"

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### WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER TO OBSERVE WORLD AIDS DAY



The twelfth annual World AIDS Day will be observed around the world on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999. Locally, the events for World AIDS Day will take place at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Heaton Pavilion 2<sup>nd</sup> floor lobby from 09:00 – 15:30. Visit the pavilion and enjoy the day's events! Test your knowledge of HIV/AIDS facts for prizes and World's AIDS Day memorabilia. Fill out a ticket for the raffle – you need not be present to win. Other features include a display of two panels of the "AIDS Memorial Quilt", which were made by patients, family and friends here at WRAMC. Learn about HIV/AIDS by visiting poster displays. Trained hospital staff will be on site throughout the day to answer any questions. This event is coordinated by Community Health Nursing, Preventive Medicine Service with the support of the WRAMC Junior Officer Council and Social Work Services and the local American Red Cross.

This year's World AIDS theme is "AIDS—End the Silence. Listen, Learn, Live!" The purpose of this theme is to promote communication with those who are affected—directly and indirectly—by HIV/AIDS. World AIDS Day aims to increase awareness of the magnitude of HIV/AIDS epidemic globally and in the US despite exciting new advancements in treatment. Ending the silence about HIV/AIDS will stimulate the development of new programs for young people to minimize their vulnerability to HIV and reduce the stigma and discrimination surrounding the epidemic.

- **Listen** to children and young people, hear what they feel is important in their lives, engage in conversation with them about issues that concern them, including sex, sexuality and HIV/AIDS.
- **Learn** from one another - children from children, children from adults, adults from children, adults from other adults, HIV-negative from HIV-positive-about respect, participation, support, and protection from HIV infection and AIDS stigma.
- **Live** in a world where fewer people become infected with HIV, and where children and young people with HIV or AIDS can live free from discrimination.

As of 1999, 33.4 million men, women and children worldwide were estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS. If current trends continue, nearly 40 million adults will be infected with HIV by the year 2000. In 1998, nearly 3 million children and young people became infected with HIV—about 590,000 children under 15 and more than 2.5 million 15-24 year olds. In the United States, 688,200 people have been reported infected with HIV/AIDS as of 1998.

All communities are affected by the continuing spread of AIDS. The District of Columbia Department of Health reports that 19,842 people in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area have been diagnosed with AIDS as of December 1998. Fifty-five percent – 11,009 of those individuals - have died.

World AIDS Day will link communities throughout the United States in a unified observance when the White House dims its lights on the evening of December 1<sup>st</sup>. This visual

demonstration will signify the commitment to fight the AIDS global epidemic and will give tribute to people living with HIV/AIDS and those who have died from AIDS.

One hundred ninety-one countries around the world are observing this day to draw attention to the AIDS epidemic. In the United States, activities for World AIDS Day around the country are coordinated by the American Association for World Health, in conjunction with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Pan American Health Organization, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

For more information please contact Preventive Medicine Service, Community Health Nursing at 782-3964.

Facts:

- Every 10 seconds, a child or young person in our world is infected with HIV.
- The United States has the highest reported rate of AIDS in the industrialized world. (American Association for World Health)
- In the United States there is one Aids-related death every 15 minutes, and someone is infected with HIV every 13 minutes. (Center for Disease Control)
- 80% of Americans infected with HIV do not even know they are infected.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that half of all HIV infections worldwide occur between the ages of 15 and 19.
- Over 410,000 Americans have died from AIDS.
- Aids is the worlds fastest spreading epidemic.
- Aids is the leading cause of death among Americans ages 25-44. Worldwide, women are the fastest growing group of new HIV infections.
- Around one-third of the estimated 33 million people living with HIV virus at the end of 1998 are young people between 15 and 14 years old.
- About half of all new HIV infections occur in the 15-24 year age group.
- An estimated 3 million children and young people became infected with HIV in 1998. This equals more than 5 young people getting infected every minute and more than 8500 every day.
- Up to 60% of all HIV infections in females occur by the age of 20.

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***Are available through  
Community Health  
Nursing.  
(202) 782-3964***

Material for this article was obtained from American Association for World Health, Worlds AIDS Day 1999 press release.